

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listing of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1-8. (Canceled).

9. (New) An automatic analyzer comprising:

an analytical module for analyzing living body samples;

a sample supply unit for supplying said samples;

a sample collection unit for collecting said samples;

a conveyer unit for conveying sample racks with samples to be analyzed from said sample supply unit to said analytical module and conveying sample racks, for which sampling has completed, from said analytical module to said sample collection unit; and

a sample buffer arrangement arranged on the conveyer unit for receiving samples from the sample supply unit, holding them, supplying desired ones of them to the analytical module, receiving samples returned from the analytical module and supplying returned samples to the sample collection unit, said sample buffer arrangement comprising at least two buffers including a first buffer disposed at one end of said conveyer unit for receiving samples from the sample supply unit, holding them and supplying desired ones of them to said conveyer unit for conveyance to said analytical module, and a second buffer disposed at the other end of said

conveyer unit for holding samples for which sampling has completed, returning samples to be re-analyzed to said analytical module and returning samples to be re-analyzed to said sample collection unit,

wherein said conveyer unit is adapted to transfer samples for which sampling has completed to said second buffer for them to wait for analysis results, and to evacuate samples still to be subjected to sampling to said first buffer if another sample requires urgent analysis, said first buffer being adapted to supply said sample requiring urgent analysis to the analytical module via the conveyer unit from which samples have been evacuated.

10. (New) An automatic analyzer according to claim 9, further comprising:

an urgent sample loading unit for receiving an urgent sample and conveying it to the first buffer; and

a controller for, when an urgent sample is loaded into the urgent sample loading unit, controlling said analytical module to complete sampling of general samples currently being subjected to sampling, and controlling the conveyer unit to convey general samples still to be subjected to sampling to the first buffer, to convey the urgent sample to the analytical module and to convey general samples in the first buffer to the analytical module after said urgent sample has been analyzed.

11. (New) An automatic analyzer according to Claim 9, wherein said conveyer unit has one conveyer line that is moved back and forth.

12. (New) An automatic analyzer according to Claim 9, wherein said conveyer unit has at least two conveyer lines that are moved back and forth.

13. (New) An automatic analyzer according to Claim 9, wherein said conveyer unit has at least two conveyer lines of which one is dedicated to forward movement and another is dedicated to backward movement.

14. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 9, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure in which a plurality of sample racks are held substantially along spokes of a rotatable base.

15. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 10, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure in which a plurality of sample racks are held substantially along spokes of a rotatable base.

16. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 11, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure in which a plurality of sample racks are held substantially along spokes of a rotatable base.

17. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 12, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure in which a plurality of sample racks are held substantially along spokes of a rotatable base.

18. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 13, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure in which a plurality of sample racks are held substantially along spokes of a rotatable base.

19. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 9, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure holding a plurality of sample racks arranged on a base so that they lie side by side substantially in one direction, the structure including a line switching unit for moving said base in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction in which sample racks are arranged.

20. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 10, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure holding a plurality of sample racks arranged on a base so that they lie side by side substantially in one direction, the structure including a line switching unit for moving said base in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction in which sample racks are arranged.

21. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 11, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure holding a plurality of sample racks arranged on a base so that they lie side by side substantially in one direction, the structure including a line switching unit for moving said base in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction in which sample racks are arranged.

22. (New) An automatic analyzer according to 12, wherein said sample buffer arrangement has a structure holding a plurality of sample racks arranged on a base so that they lie side by side substantially in one direction, the structure including a line switching unit for moving said base in a direction substantially perpendicular to the direction in which sample racks are arranged.